

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE AIRPORT COMMISSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Airport Commission convened in a regular session on Thursday, October 14, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Fitch, Hsiao, Orpe, and Tymczyszyn.

Absent: Commissioners Dingman, Donnellan, and Chairperson Jacobsen.

Also Present: Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian and Business Manager Williams.

Due to the absences of Chairperson Jacobsen and Vice-Chairperson Donnellan, Commissioner Orpe led the meeting.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Hsiao moved to grant Commissioners Dingman, Donnellan, and Chairperson Jacobsen excused absences for the October 14, 2010 Commission meeting. Commissioner Fitch seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**3. FLAG SALUTE**

Recording Secretary Deborah Schaffer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. AFFIDAVIT OF AGENDA POSTING**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Fitch, seconded by Commissioner Tymczyszyn, moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**5A. MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2010**

Commissioner Fitch offered the following clarification to the September 9, 2010 meeting minutes: Page 2, paragraph 3, "...Commissioner Fitch explained that the Animal Disaster Team is one of three City Disaster Service Volunteer teams. ADT meets to plan..."

Commissioner Tymczyszyn noted the correct spelling of Lochard Company on Page 3, Item 9F, paragraph 2.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Tymczyszyn moved for the approval of the September 9, 2010 Airport Commission meeting minutes as amended. Commissioner Hsiao

seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioners Dingman, Donnellan, and Chairperson Jacobsen).

**6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1 AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Commissioner Fitch announced the Great California Shake Out on October 21, 2010 and a Tip-A-Cop benefit on November 18, 2010 at Romano's Macaroni Grill.

Hope Witkowsky, Mesa Street, described her participation and simulations that take place during the Great California Shake Out.

Commissioner Hsiao announced a Chinese School fundraiser on October 30, 2010 at the Doubletree Hotel.

**7. ACTION ITEMS**

**7A. REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM HELICOPTER ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS**

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian provided background on the helicopter roundtable meetings of July 22, August 26, and September 30, 2010 regarding helicopter operations in and around the Airport. He reported that discussions centered on community concerns regarding helicopter altitudes, routes, and noise. He stated that, as discussions progressed, a better understanding was achieved by all parties involved and a strategy was agreed upon by participants. He presented and briefly reviewed the recommendations set forth by the roundtable working group in the material of record and recommended that the Commission review, provide input, and recommend approval of the strategy to City Council. He stated that all of the short-term goals in the strategy are a start in the right direction to make an immediate positive change.

He noted that staff also recommends, as a long-term goal, that a small subcommittee of seven to nine people be formed, consisting of representatives from the Airport Commission, helicopter operators, community members, FAA staff, and City staff, to examine the current helicopter Letter of Agreement and to present any changes to the Commission by December 2010 for its review. He noted the January/February 2011 deadline for submitting any revisions, or routes at all, to the Southern California Airspace Users Group to be published in the helicopter charts for potential publication in July 2011. He stated that if no revision is recommended, the current helicopter routes would be submitted to the Airspace Users Group for publication. He mentioned that the FAA Torrance Tower chief is fully on board with the strategy.

Commissioner Tymczyszyn stated that he attended all three roundtable meetings and that Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian has provided a very good synopsis.

In response to Commissioner Fitch's inquiry, Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian stated that he would take whatever strategy the Commission recommends to City Council in two weeks and request approval to move forward with formation of a subcommittee. He provided clarification that nothing would be publicized until the subcommittee has a recommendation.

Richard Root, Via Buena Ventura, stated that the roundtable process was a good one and thanked Commissioners Tymczyszyn and Donnellan for their participation. He stated that he was disappointed that two of the four helicopter operators based at the Airport did not attend any of the meetings. Referring to the first bullet point in the strategy, he stated that the current Letter of Agreement already states that helicopters will fly above 600 feet mean sea level when safety allows. He noted that most helicopters fly above 600 feet and that citizens are asking for a much higher minimum. He voiced support for the formation of a subcommittee.

He discussed the WebTrak system and the proposal for the City to implement a module that would provide on-line access for the public to view aircraft tracking. He stated that past minutes indicate that the Commission thought that a tracking system would be included in the contract awarded to Lochard in 2005 but that it never materialized.

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian suggested that Mr. Root bring up the WebTrak system under Oral Communications.

Hope Witkowsky, Mesa Street, stated that she attended the roundtable meetings and that a representative from the helicopter's association showed a track map that they publish. She indicated that revisions to this map should be made as soon as possible and not to wait for the subcommittee's recommendations. She stated that illegal turns of fixed wing aircraft should also be addressed.

Barry Jay, Brian Avenue, stated that 600 feet mean sea level is equivalent to 500 feet above ground level. He noted that the helicopter chart has not been revised for five years and does not have a regular revision cycle. He stated if revisions are not submitted by the deadline, it may not be five years until the next revision and could be as soon as six months. He emphasized the importance of taking the time to come up with approach and departure paths that are safe and reasonable, adding that current helicopter routes should at least be submitted for publication. He noted that whatever is agreed upon is just an agreement and falls to the FAA to control traffic, not to the City.

In response to Acting Chairperson Orpe's inquiry, Mr. Jay explained responsibilities of air traffic controllers and pilots in command.

Commissioner Tymczyszyn pointed out that the City's Municipal Code regulations relating to the Airport are old and outdated. He stated that alternate flight routes were proposed at the roundtable meetings and that the subcommittee should consider these.

John Bailey, Walnut Avenue, stated that it was important to involve the other helicopter operators in discussions. He suggested adding under "Background" that at the July 22, 2010 roundtable meeting, the Commander from the Coast Guard committed to a reduction in routine transit flights over the City.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Tymczyszyn moved to recommend the strategy set forth by the helicopter roundtable working group including formation of a committee to open and reexamine the current helicopter Letter of Agreement. Commissioner Hsiao seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioners Dingman, Donnellan, and Chairperson Jacobsen).

**8. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**8A. AERONAUTICAL OPERATIONAL INFORMATION UNDER THE PURVIEW OF THE GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

Acting Chairperson Orpe noted that the following reports for October 2010 were included in agenda materials: Hangar and Tie down Rental Status, Ongoing Projects, October 2010 Meeting Room Schedule, Hangar Waiting List, Events Requiring Emergency Response, and Airfield Operations Status.

Referring to Ongoing Projects, Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian noted that Hangar Electrical Phase II is on schedule, the executive hangar row is complete, and project completion is expected in late December 2010.

**8B. LAND MANAGEMENT REPORT – AERONAUTICAL**

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian noted that a Land Management Update from Land Management Team Chair Sunshine was included in agenda materials. He reported that construction of the new Robinson Helicopter facility is almost complete, with major undergrounding of utilities to begin soon.

**8C. NOISE ABATEMENT QUARTERLY REPORT**

Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian noted that the Torrance Airport Noise Abatement Quarterly Report for July 1, 2010 to September 30, 2010 was included in supplemental materials. He stated that requested changes are being worked on and should be reflected in the next Quarterly Report.

Commissioner Tymczyszyn questioned the decrease in violations for July, August, and September 2010 and Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian responded that to his knowledge there was no problem with the Noise Abatement system.

**9. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

**9A.** Responding to Richard Root's comments under Item 7A, Commissioner Tymczyszyn stated that it was his recollection and understanding that the public would have Internet access to the WebTrak system. He noted that he recently questioned Deputy Director Cessna about it and was informed that it was always an extra cost item.

**9B.** Commissioner Fitch discussed a recent trip to Arizona and visit with her cousin who has a Cessna 157.

**9C.** Acting Chairperson Orpe wished everyone a Happy Halloween.

**9D.** John Bailey discussed the City's study on train noise and noted that he was unable to get any information about noise violations in Torrance on the LAX or Long Beach WebTrak systems.

Commissioner Tymczyszyn explained how WebTrak systems depend on radar transponders that are onboard aircraft, adding that 95% of take-offs and landings at Torrance Airport are under visual flight rules.

Richard Root stated that it is confusing for the public to use the LAX WebTrak system and that the City needs its own system.

**9E.** Hope Witkowsky expressed her appreciation to Commissioner Tymczyszyn for his service to the City.

**9F.** Following a brief discussion, it was determined that the Commission would go dark in November 2010 and adjourn this meeting to December 9, 2010.

**9G.** Facility Operations Manager Megerdichian provided an update on the proposed Long Beach Class C airspace changes. He advised that on September 14, 2010 City Council agreed to send a letter of opposition to the FAA before the September 21, 2010 deadline. He noted that consultant Williams Aviation has recently shared its technical analysis with City staff and that he would keep Commissioners informed.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** At 8:34 p.m., Commissioner Fitch moved to adjourn the meeting to Thursday, December 9, 2010 in the West Annex meeting room at 7:00 p.m. Commissioner Hsiao seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Acting Chairperson Orpe so ordered.

Approved as Amended December 9, 2010 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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